



# iDMB

*A Newsletter for the Employees of the Department of Management and Budget*

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## Offices study employee feedback

DMB managers are learning how employees responded to the department's organizational assessment and looking at ways to use the information to get more employee feedback.

"Directors and managers are reviewing responses and narrowing their areas of focus," said Tim McCormick, director of Organizational Development and coordinator of the survey.

Organizational Development staff have processed information and presented findings to directors and managers in the seven DMB offices. Managers have been asked to consider the information and narrow their focus.

"We have cautioned directors about tackling too many areas at once - trying to 'fix' everything," McCormick said. "But now that they have numbers, they are eager to address those issues highlighted by the employee survey."

Instead, McCormick has asked managers to look at the areas with the lowest scores and consider whether focus on one or two of them will affect other key areas. For example, focus on better communication also may boost teamwork or improve the ability to coordinate projects across DMB.

McCormick told managers that new projects or initiatives might not be the answer to improvement. In some areas, initiatives and programs are already beginning to produce positive results, he said. "These should not be uprooted but given adequate time to yield fruit."

After managers have studied the information, they will explore ways to dig deeper and get more feedback in selected areas. Some ways to do this include holding employee meetings, conducting office mini surveys, or using focus groups to gather input, McCormick said. Methods will vary by office.

All DMB employees were invited to participate in the online survey between May 19 and May 30.



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# News from the Offices



## Your ideas *still* count

Although the "Your Ideas Count" campaign was announced in March, the employee suggestion program continues to be in active mode.

"I want people to keep looking for ways to improve operations and cut expenses," said Mitch Irwin, director of the Department of Management and Budget. "Our employees are at the center of DMB operations and know how to best streamline processes."

Recent employee suggestions to reduce trash pickup at Vehicle and Travel Services and to use a lower-cost temporary services contractor

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## Library offers online assistance

You are writing a report and need information. You don't have time to visit the library, and you wouldn't know where to look if you did.

What you really need is a reference librarian. Fortunately, you have one - a librarian who is only keystrokes away.

"Ask a Librarian" offers an all-purpose portal for library assistance without a trip to the library. The service is available to anyone in Michigan, but it has special value for state employees who need research information.

"We want state government and legislative employees to contact us," said reference librarian **Diane Donham**. "We're your library."

Library users can choose from several options. They may:

- Browse the library's extensive "frequently asked questions" page at [www.michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160-21875-F,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160-21875-F,00.html)
  - Call a librarian at (517) 373-1300 during the library's regular hours
  - Send an e-mail note to [librarian@michigan.gov](mailto:librarian@michigan.gov)
  - Start an online question-and-answer session with a librarian at [www.michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160-17449\\_18640\\_18659-,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160-17449_18640_18659-,00.html)
- Sessions are available from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. daily, except for holidays.

The online option is the newest reference service the library offers.

"It's like online chat," said Donham. "The patron and the librarian exchange dialog. We can send files and Web sites that would be relevant."

Librarians are available to help state employees with any work-related research, but Donham said that factually based, concrete questions are best for online chat. They allow librarians to provide very specific answers.

For example, Donham said an online user with a Federal Census-related question could receive more than just a statistic. The librarian also could provide the full table that contains the data.

Librarians answer questions from the public, but the scope of assistance is more limited. "We're able to point people to resources and tell them how to use them," she said. "We also can provide answers to quick factual items."

One user was pleased with the addition of an online option for library assistance. "She said the seven on her cell phone was broken, so she couldn't call to renew books," Donham said.

When Donham and the other staff answer calls and online contacts, they are never sure which request they'll get next. But they do know they'll be able to connect patrons with the resources they need to answer their questions.

# News from the Offices

## Your ideas still count

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have resulted in annual savings of more than \$5,500.

"I'm especially interested in ideas that may involve processes across offices in the department," Irwin said.

"Sometimes one department needs the cooperation of another area in order to change its processes. 'Your Ideas Count' is intended to take away these challenges."

Suggestions may be sent by e-mail to [DMB-OrgServices@michigan.gov](mailto:DMB-OrgServices@michigan.gov) or by ID mail to Organizational Services, Attn. Pam Nemanis, Lewis Cass Building, Second Floor.

## DMB volunteers join Habitat effort

About 20 Department of Management and Budget employees plan to trade their workday routines for another "constructive" effort.



On Friday, Sept. 19, the building crew will join Habitat for Humanity at its Tri-Centennial Village west of the Old Tiger Stadium in Detroit. At least 60 new Habitat homes will be completed in the core-city neighborhood over the next two years.

This volunteer effort represents the second leg of the 2003 State of Michigan Employee Build, which has been proposed as an annual event.

Volunteers do not need special skills to participate, said Bridget Medina of the director's office and coordinator of the DMB effort. Although protective clothing will be available, volunteers are encouraged to bring their own.

Employees may still sign up for the daylong project, which begins at 8 a.m. in Detroit. Habitat crews usually work until 4:30 p.m. Because they will be outside, rain or shine, workers should dress for the weather. The lunch break is taken at the site, and participants should bring sack lunches and beverages in coolers or thermal containers. Employees may sign up by contacting Medina at [medinab1@michigan.gov](mailto:medinab1@michigan.gov) or (517) 241-8483. She will provide details of the event, a map of the location, and a list of suggested supplies.

Employee participants will use annual leave time to cover their work absences.

Habitat for Humanity brings together communities and families in need with volunteers to build affordable, decent housing. Houses are sold at no profit, and payments are reinvested in the building of additional houses. Since 1976, Habitat for Humanity has built more than 125,000 houses in 87 countries. More than 45,000 homes have been built in the United States.

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## Reminder

Shut off personal computers, task lighting and appliances between 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. Mondays through Thursdays and from 9 p.m. Friday to 6 a.m. Monday.



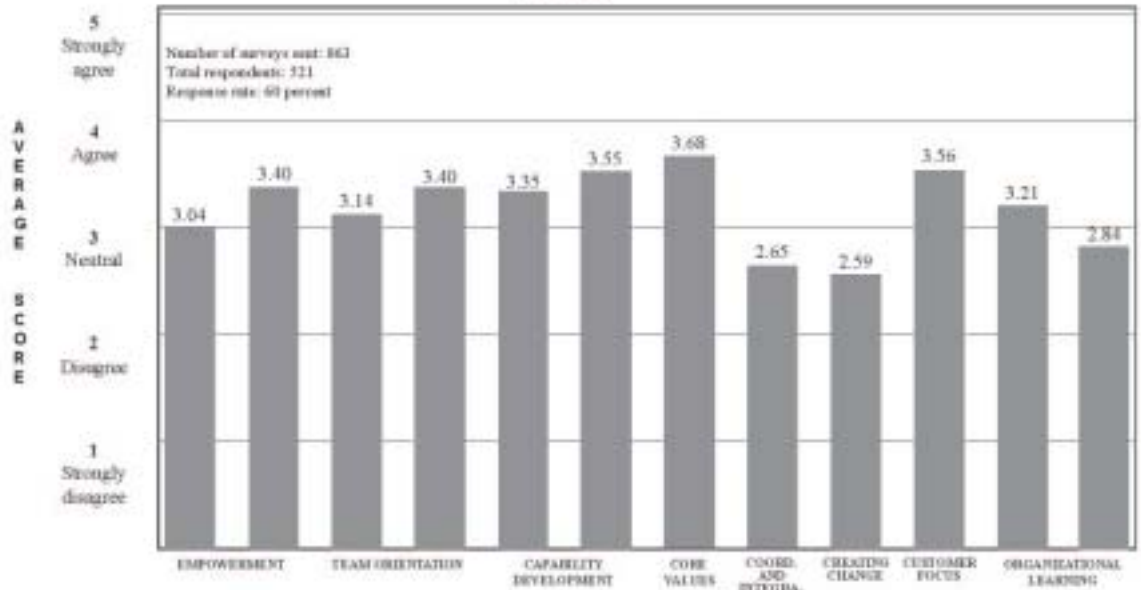
# News from the Offices

## Employee assessment questions

- Information is widely shared so everyone can get information when it's needed.
- Employees have the materials and equipment they need to do the job right.
- People work like they are part of a team.
- Leaders hold individuals and teams accountable for achieving results.
- Authority is delegated so that people can act on their own.
- Problems often arise because we do not have the skills necessary to do the job.
- There is an ethical code that guides our behavior and tells us right from wrong.
- It is easy to coordinate projects across different parts of DMB.

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SUMMARY OF RESPONSES:  
DMB ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT  
MAY 2003



## Survey draws high response

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A total of 863 employees received e-mail notes with a link to the Web survey. Of those, 521 took the survey, a response rate of 60 percent.

The survey contained 12 questions that gathered employee opinions on topics ranging from sharing information to encouraging innovation and risk taking. Employees identified on a numeric scale whether they strongly agreed or agreed with a statement, felt neutral, or disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Employees responded most favorably when asked whether DMB followed an ethical code, linked customer input with decisions, and whether employees had the skills needed to do their jobs. They gave their lowest marks to flexibility of processes and ease of change, ease of project coordination across DMB, and encouragement and reward of innovation and risk taking.

An additional question invited participants to offer their comments to DMB leadership. A total of 223 comments were submitted.

McCormick said employee assessment would be an ongoing focus for Organizational Development staff. He plans periodic mini surveys using a smaller selection of questions from the full employee assessment. These surveys will be distributed to smaller groups of randomly selected employees.

"Employee input is important to DMB leaders and operations," he said.

# News from the Offices

## Survey Questions

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- The way things are done is very flexible and easy to change.
- Customer input directly influences our decisions.
- We view failure as an opportunity to learn and improve.
- Innovation and risk taking are encouraged and rewarded.

## Human Resources begins process improvement

DMB professionals are applying the knowledge they gained in a recent human resources consulting training to restructure the department's recruitment process.

**Angie Fuqua, Julie Harris, Ann Kroneman, Joyce Macauley and Mary Beth Seppala** participated in the nine-day workshop, which the Department of Civil Service offered to human resources professionals from throughout state government. Program presenters included labor and industrial relations faculty from Michigan State University, who posed a variety of business models and helped staff examine processes.

"It exposed us to the various models that are used to optimize processes," said Kroneman, director of DMB Human Resources.

She said the training helped them gain a better understanding of their roles as customer consultants and reinforced the proactive role Human Resources needs to play in supporting the department's strategic goals.

The training format gave staff time to examine the current employee recruitment process and provided a strong start in the revision.

"It gave us a good opportunity to step back and look at our process," Kroneman said. "Now we have defined process steps that allow a lot of customer feedback."

Although they made good progress, Kroneman said a number of steps remain. She plans to use focus groups to gather customer input, which will be used to improve recruitment efforts.

"We looked at things from a customer's viewpoint and a candidate's viewpoint to see what the differences are," Macauley said.

Besides teaching them about process improvement, the sessions also allowed staff to interact with other human resources professionals in state government.

"It gave us an opportunity to share ideas and insights with our peers," Kroneman said.

"We don't get to trade ideas often," Macauley said.

**"It gave us a good opportunity to step back and look at our processes."  
-Ann Kroneman**

# News from the Offices

## 50 DMB workers earn certification



In the last three months, about 50 DMB employees completed forklift training and received certificates to operate the equipment. MIOSHA requires operators to obtain certification, which is valid for three years. Safety analyst **Dan Morgan**, at right, worked with staff at Vehicle and Travel Services, and employees in Infrastructure Services and Tenant and Land Services participated in similar trainings. Participants received instruction, took a written test and maneuvered a forklift through an obstacle course. Offices can arrange forklift training for employees by contacting safety and health staff. More information is available from Joel Hoffman, Safety and Health Services, (517) 241-2890.

### Phone numbers available online

Looking for a state colleague's phone number?

DMB employees are reminded that telephone numbers and e-mail addresses of state employees can be found online. A searchable phone directory is available at [www.state.mi.us/dmb/ocat/directory/](http://www.state.mi.us/dmb/ocat/directory/)

## Employee shines in comedy

**Abby Murphy**, a student assistant with the State Building Authority, recently wrapped up a five-night run as the title character in the Turner House Festival production of *Lysistrata 2411 A.D.* The production, an adaptation of Aristophanes' classical Greek play, centers on Lysistrata, played by Murphy, who leads the women of a post-apocalyptic future in a revolt to bring about lasting peace.

Six of Murphy's co-workers attended the Thursday, June 26, performance.

"Abby's performance was great," said Steve Davis. "She has a gift for comedy. She always makes people laugh around the office with her offbeat antics."

The Turner House Festival is an annual outdoor event sponsored by Lansing Community College.



Abby Murphy

# Employee Happenings

## *Correspondents:*

### **Acquisition Services**

Marilyn Becker  
Penny Saites

### **Agency Services**

Geneva Hawthorne

### **Director's Office**

Jeanette Doll

### **Financial Services**

Terri Powers

### **Infrastructure Services**

Diane Perrelli

### **Organizational Services**

Jeannette Bekke

### **Retirement Services**

Rosemary Baker

### **Tenant and Land Services**

Steve Davis

## *Columnist:*

### **Judy Ferrigan**

Safety and Health

## *Editors:*

Linda Norlock

Jennifer Rehmann

### **Director of Organizational Development:**

Tim McCormick

*iDMB* is an electronic newsletter produced monthly by Organizational Services for the employees of the Department of Management and Budget. If you have questions or comments please call (517) 335-5283.

## Financial Services joins in cleanup

Some DMB Financial Services staff have joined MDOT's Adopt-a-Highway program, working to keep a stretch of Lansing Road clean.

And, yes, the two-mile section of highway does come with adoption papers.



The FS workers are members of the Lansing chapter of the Association of Government Accountants, the "adoptive parents" of the roadway from Snow Road west to I-69.

"It even goes by the MDOT building," said **Ed Nierescher**, an FS accountant and co-coordinator of community service for the chapter. **Tony Alvord**, auditor general's office, serves as the other coordinator, and Financial Services staff **Debbie Brady** and **Barbara Powers** are committee members.

Volunteers gather for the cleanup three times each year: once each in April, July and September. During the July 16 cleanup, 14 association members collected 19 bags of garbage. That number is much lower than the total from the first collection in April 2002, when 75 bags of trash were filled.

Nierescher said the workers haven't found any unusual trash - just the typical broken bottles and food wrappers. But they have seen a lot of deer tracks and a few areas where deer have been bedding.

The crew closed last month's work bee with a cookout at Nierescher's home.

The Adopt-a-Highway program is organized by the Michigan Department of Transportation. MDOT provides the groups with trash bags and orange safety vests to wear while they are working. MDOT picks up the filled bags for disposal. Since 1990, Adopt-a-Highway groups have collected more than a million bags of trash.

Currently, 3,000 groups are responsible for maintenance of more than 6,900 miles of Michigan highways.



Back row: Steve Rose, Uday Malavia, Duane Smiley (Auditor General), Barbara Powers, Sam DeBourbon, Ed Nierescher. Front row: Doreen Brown, John Polley, Christy Ryan (FIA), Linda DeBourbon (DMVA), Randy Bitner. Not pictured: Howard Pizzo.